



MINNEAPOLIS  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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**DATE:** MARCH 29, 2022  
**TO:** KIM ELLISON, CHAIR  
**CC:** MPS BOARD DIRECTORS  
**FROM:** ED GRAFF  
**RE:** NOTIFICATION

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This letter serves as formal documentation of my announced decision to decline a third contract as Superintendent of Minneapolis Public Schools. My last day with the District will be Thursday, June 30.

For the past six years the Minneapolis Public Schools Board of Directors has given me the extraordinary opportunity to fulfill a life calling and make a difference in the lives of children.

I am proud of what we have accomplished over these six years. Together, we have reduced the number of racially isolated schools, created Hmong and Somali language and cultural pathways K-12, instituted 5<sup>th</sup>-grade music for all, 30 minutes of daily recess in all elementary schools, supported the passage of two referenda, revised enrollment and lottery processes, removed rubber-made materials on playgrounds, ensured that all schools have school-based mental health clinic supports, centralized magnet schools and invested in facilities and programming to support District learning priorities, launched a new climate and behavior framework to make our schools more safe and welcoming, opened new athletic fields at South and North High Schools and a new pool at Franklin Middle School; and the list goes on.

Of course, we can't ignore the pandemic and the disruption to our normal rituals and routines which began in March 2020 and continued to the current school year. Testing me and my entire team – in ways we never could have imagined. And yet, we were able to quickly regroup, refocus and carry our original goals through to completion.

While remaining focused on learning, we simultaneously prioritized staff and student safety, distributed more than one million meals to students in distance learning, and shifted the district to universal technology access in weeks by distributing more than 18,000 devices and 3,000 hotspots to support teaching and learning.

In May 2020 the unthinkable happened again, this time in the form of the killing of Mr. George Floyd by a member of the Minneapolis Police Department. Yet, in the days and weeks to follow we tried to facilitate healing and stability to our traumatized school community. I am so grateful for the work of staff across the District who persevered despite their own grief and trauma during that time. They showed up, met deadlines, found partner resources and supports for our students and families, volunteered to help rebuild the neighborhoods in which our schools reside and so much more.

We have been state and national leaders in multiple areas during my tenure: deeply embedding social and emotional learning in all of our schools, moving magnet schools from segregated neighborhoods to more diverse, centralized locations, mandating ethnic studies courses for all graduating seniors and requiring all District policies and practices be considered through our racial equity policy. We were also among the first in the nation in 2020 to conduct virtual graduation ceremonies for all of our high schools, simulcast in multiple languages and streamed globally. Our students have excelled and been recognized in Minnesota and beyond academically, in the arts and athletically.

The unforeseen challenges we have endured reinforced my belief that it is critically important for large urban districts not to chase the latest fads or drop initiatives after one or two years in search of a quick fix. To this end, we remained focused on the key levers previously identified to improve outcomes for all students. As a result, we have made some academic gains through an intentional academic plan, targeted professional development and an ongoing examination of our policies and practices.

Despite these successes and the Board's majority vote to renew my contract and continue the transformational efforts we have begun, I have chosen to pursue other opportunities at this time.

It was a difficult decision but ultimately, after praying and careful consideration I've decided that it is time to turn over the helm of leadership in Minneapolis to someone new. MPS has a team of committed and dedicated educators, parents and community members who want our students to succeed and I am confident they will continue to join hands with you to make that happen.

I am profoundly grateful and honored for having been given a chance to serve. Our children, MPS students, are truly special, and I will always treasure them in my heart. Thank you again for your work on behalf of the children of Minneapolis. It has been an honor to serve as your superintendent for these past six years.

Respectfully,

Ed Graff